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Relevance

Hinduism in Modern Age

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ವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯ.

At this supremely dangerous moment in human history, the only way of salvation for mankind is the Indian way. Here we have the attitude and spirit that can make it possible for human race to grow together into a single family, and in this Atomic Age this is the only alternative to destroying ourselves.

ARNOLD TOYNBEE

"A characteristic of Hinduism is its respectivity and all-comprehensiveness. It claims to be the one religion of humanity, of human nature, of the entire world. It cares not to oppose the progress of any other system, for it has no difficulty in including all other religions within its all embracing arms and ever-widening fold.

"And in real truth, Hinduism has something to offer which is suited to all minds. Its very strength lies in its infinite adaptability to the indefinite diversity of human character and human tendencies. It has its highly spiritual and abstract side suited to the metapysical philosopher, its practical and concrete side suited to the man of poetic feelings and imagination, its quiescent and contemplative side suited to the man of peace and lover of seclusion."

SIR MONIER VILLIAMS

AIM OF THIS THESIS

The purpose of this brief thesis is to remove the misconceptions about Hinduism and to draw attention of intellectuals all over the world towards the fact that a balance could be achieved in the world by creating peaceful political and socio-economic climate by applying time tested principle of non-violence and universal oneness. These principles have proved successful in sustaining rich Hindu culture since time immemorial. I would specially like to point out to readers that, I have no intention of religious propaganda or no reason to create any ethnic disparity. Instead, this in an effort to provide an outlet for real progress in this scientific but violent age.

Now to achieve this aim Hinduism must be preserved in its home land. Unfortunately a political situation has developed in India in which this noble religion is being strangled on various pretexts in its own home.

If we want to save secularism in this country it can be done only through Hindu Dharma of Upanishad and Geeta.

A specific target of this essay is the new generation of Hindus, which is becoming rootless with the passage of time and who need to be helped to rediscover their solid roots, through a logical approach.

Time is running out and unless something is done fast and done now, we run the risk of forgetting a great heritage and being swept off our feet by the decadent culture of the west.

I hope this book wiil wake up some men of intelligence and help them chalk out a course of action to save Hinduism and thus humanity. It may also inspire followers of other religions to emphasise the universal and peaceful aspect of their religions.

Anandshankar Pandya.

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EMANCIPATION OF INDIA

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GANDHIJI said once : "The emancipation of India does not depend so much on Muslims and Christians as it depends on how Hindus defend their religion." (Navjivan, 15.1.1925). He pointed out that Hinduism is not just a faith, but a way of life, a set of values time-tested over centuries, a key to not only liberation of the country, but the entire mankind.

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What Gandhiji said decades ago is more than true today. During the last thirty years in particular, Hinduism has been left entirely at the mercy of God. This huge and noble society has undergone great degradation and some petty people have even dared to label it as a villain.

How could the great faith take such a tragic turn? Lulled into complacency by the very conviction that the 'Sanatan Dharma' or 'Hindu Dharma' is eternal and immortal, many of its leaders have turned inactive and careless and forgotten to nurture their dear faith since centuries.

Thus a huge chunk of humanity is feeling lost today. The Hindu society — which comprises Vaishnavites, Shaivaites, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains (the last three being branches jutting out from the mother trunk of Hinduism) — is feelling adrift in its own homeland. The elite and the intelligentsia — writers, journalists, social workers, industrialists, politicians etc. — of the community are unsuccessfully fighting to rejuvenate it. Naturally the question arises who can fulfill this mission of emancipation?

The simple truth is that they don't have to seek far and wide to find a solution to this crisis. They have just to go back to the basic values of Hinduism itself to revive it to a new glory. धर्मो रक्षति रक्षित: (Protect your religion and it will protect you), they have been taught from the cradle. So if Hindus rise in defence of their faith, the faith will safeguard their interests.

सार्वजनिक पुस्तकालय

RETURN TO RELIGION

A tree cannot survive without its roots; and man cannot stay human if he is cut off from his own culture and faith. If man is cut off from his own roots, he begins to feel a vacuum within himself — a vacuum that is fast becoming a world phenomenon. It is at this juncture that man has started looking within himself more and more and less and less at the outside world. Even in Russia, the younger generation is leaning towards religion. Then why not in India?

Hence it is the birth right of every Hindu, whichever country he may belong to, to defend his धर्म, 'Dharma', which is his स्वराज्य 'swarajya', his democratic right. It is for him to glory in the culture that great men like Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo and Mahatma Gandhi have gloried in and live with pride and self-respect. But I want to clarify that I am not talking here about Hinduism as it is being practised now. Today we have forgotten the real nature of Hinduism which had a balance of spiritualism and materialism, philosophy and science and universalism as well as nationalism. Unfortunately at a later stage in the History of Hinduism, we emphasised on the first parts neglecting the second parts because it was easier. Hence all the misery.

After a deep study it appears that Hindus can rise only through the self discipline of their dharma and not the discipline of rules, regulations and laws and without dharma they may sink down to any depth.

VALUE OF HINDUISM

We live in an age of propaganda. These days a bad medicine could be sold through wide publicity whereas the real medicine may lie unsold because it would not blow its own trumpet. If we have to arouse the conscience of humanity within India as well as outside, if the time is to be ripe enough for the fruits of Hinduism to be distributed all over the world, we have to first remove the cobwebs that have covered the faith because of neglect for centuries.

To do this, we have to first infuse the Hindu society with unity and self-confidence. While helping it to rediscover the lost values, we have to also expose the self-centred detractors of the faith, who are busy pointing out the shortcomings of Hinduism, rather than honour its proven values because Hindu society is losing self-respect and self-confidence through excessive self-pity, inferiority complex and a guilty conscience. Knowing this weakness other religions are attacking Hindus to further sap their vitality and demoralise them. As a first step towards this, we will have to show up how the 'Hindu Dharma' is so different from the other creeds.

One of the foundation stones of this 'Manav Dharma' is — सर्वधर्म समभाव 'Sarva dharma sama bhava', which denotes equal respect for all religions. For thousands of years it has spread the message of universal peace, brotherhood, non-violence and truth. Its basic tenets एकस्थित: सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा 'Ekasthitah sarvabhutanaratma' (only one spirit dwells in all creatures and hence equal respect should be shown to all), अहिंसा परमोधर्म:, 'Ahinsa paramodharma' (non-violence is the highest form of religion) and सत्यमेव जयते, 'Satymev jayate' (Truth shall prevail) reflect a breadth of vision which has no parallel anywhere else in the world.

The basic problems of the modern world — hunger, injustice and moral degradation — are the result of colonialism and political and economic exploitation of innocent countries by cunning, greedy and treacherous foreign invaders throughout the centuries. In order to cover up their misdeeds — past, present and future — some exploiters have not hesitated to even cash in on the noble image of Mother Teresa without her knowledge.

Some religions are spreading war, destruction and violence because their emergence as well as propagation were themselves through the sword. They refuse to see that the world is perching on an atomic volcano today. With one hand they raze down cities and populations and with the other they build hospitals and give medical aid. They would bleed a nation first before rushing to the poor country with loans and food grains.

Hinduism has never been guilty of such hypocricy. Hinduism has done great service to all religions by fighting naked materialism in this world and restoring the faith of man in God.

Hindu religion has since thousands of years not only spread messages of universal peace, brotherhood non-violence and truth but has practised them to perfection and this has influenced the thinking of great writers and philosophers of the world. It will not be an exaggeration to state that in the absence of Hindu philosophy, the human civilization would have taken a different turn and bogged the world into a Third World War. Hence we should make Ahimsa or non-violence the religion of the whole world and this can be done only through the structure of Hinduism, which is non-violent from top to bottom and which has helped us in achieving our freedom through non-violence.

Take the case of Emperor Asoka. On realising the horrors of war, not only did he renounce it for ever, but he sent his son and daughter and other messengers of love to China, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and other countries to spread the creed of non-violence. For a world staggering under the burden of armaments, on which over 500 billion dollars have been reportedly spent in recent years, there cannot be a better lesson to open its eyes. Hinduism allows violence only when the evil begins to dominate the good.

The faith of Hinduism in peace is so deep that Yajur-Veda devoted a special chapter to the hope शं नो द्यावापृथिवीपूर्वहूतौ-शमन्तरिक्षं दृशये नो अस्तु ऋक् 7/35,5 "Let there be peace everywhere in this world as well as other planets" — a great ideal which should prompt other religions to renounce their ego and adopt the great truths of Hinduism — a task that could be managed without taking recourse to conversions.

It is a tragedy that such a great and noble religion is being neglected by Hindus as well as the human race.

SPIRIT OF SELF-SACRIFICE

Hinduism is a religion of self-sacrifice and penance. It believes that truth will prevail in the ultimate end. Hence force of self-aggrandisement, pleasures of the senses, lust and greed have been working against it.

History, both ancient and modern, is replete with atrocities on Hindus at the hands of other religions, particularly within India. But their spirit of tolerance is such that they have tackled such display of hatred and inhumanity with peace and goodwill, thus defusing the tension in the air. Such an example of self-sacrifice cannot be found elsewhere in the world.

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Exploitation of the weak is an inherent part of the Western culture because it believes in the philosophy of 'survival of the fittest'. Hinduism, on the other hand, believes in 'Live and let live', which is the outcome of सर्वेजना: सुखिनो भवन्तु — 'Let happiness come to all beings'. This tenet denotes sublimitation of unbridled materialism, sensual pleasures, greed and other root causes of all types of exploitation, war and violence.

This philosophy is way above that of Marx and could be instrumental in checking the growth of communism all over the world. It could pave the way for emancipation of all the poor and the exploited.

SCIENCE OF BETTERMENT

Hinduism is not just a religion. It is also a science for the betterment of the human society. It propounds the best form of discipline — spiritual, mental, physical. Through its unique branch Yoga, it can lift humanity to unlimited heights of mental power, peace, happiness and prosperity. Intelligent Westerners burdened with life's problems and going through a crisis of faith have found

spiritual shelter under the various umbrellas of Hinduism like Hare Krishna Movement, Swami Muktanandji, Swami Chinmayanandji, Sri Mahesh Yogi and others.

But if the Hindus do not care, they will soon find that in the absence of moral, cultural and religious education, the new generation is destined to a life of misery, acquiring all the infirmities of western culture added to their own.

WOMANHOOD AND FAMILY

Hinduism was the first to declare to the world यत्र नार्यस्तु पूज्यन्ते रमन्ते तत्र देवता: (God resides where women are worshipped). No other religion has invested womanhood with such respect and regard It was only Hinduism which could give woman her right place in this male-dominated world. This is in sharp contrast to the Western approach, which regards woman as a sex symbol and nothing else. The very fact that while in other countries women are still fighting for their rights a woman could become the country's Prime Minister goes to prove how enlightened is the Hindu view of womanhood. Hinduism considers the purity of conjugal life as the pivot of all moral actions in a society and has been acting on this principle since its inception. This has built great moral status and respect for womanhood in India.

One of the significant values of the Hindu society is the love, respect and warmth that pervade a family. Between father and son, mother and son, wife and husband, among brothers, uncles and even distant relations there prevails such a deep and sincere bond of affection and respect which is not to be seen in any other society. Though these chains of love are being corroded day by day due to the impact of Western culture, it is not difficult to preserve the basic values of this system.

SOCIALISM IN PRACTICE

The world's greatest poet Kalidasa worte : आदानं हि विसर्गाय सतां वारिमुचामिव,— 'Noble people collect wealth only to redistribute

it, just as clouds gather water to rain it over the earth again'. In historic times Hindu kings like Harshavardhan used to give away their entire wealth every five years — a fact that is recorded. The same ideal with its slight re-orientation is to be found in the trusteeship principle propounded by Mahatma Gandhi.

बहुजन हिताय बहुजन सुखाय, — Let welfare and happiness reach the common man — says Hindu scriptures.

UNTOUCHABILITY

Untouchability and social inequality has nothing to do with Hinduism. It is totally against all tenets expounded by the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Gita. It is the byproduct of slavery, feudalism and other historical, political and socio-economic factors like bonded labour. It should be noted that when Hinduism was at its zenith, there were no atrocities on Harijans Like corruption, rape and dowry murders, it is an ailment of the modern society, and could in no way be attributed to Hinduism. In fact persons involved in above crimes should be declared untouchables instead of Harijans.

आत्मवत सर्व भूतेषु —Consider all living creature as you would consider your own self' — says the Hindu culture. That the society has emulated this principle in practice is clear from the fact that many Hindu scriptures have been written by the so-called 'shudras'. Valmiki and Ved Vyas, who authored our greatest epics Ramayana and Mahabharata, and eighteen puranas were both shudras. Bhagawan Ram embraced many shudras like Guha, and Nishad. His eating of berries tasted by Shabari is a touching instance that could destroy the myth of Hindu untouchability at one stroke. Shri Vaishampayan in 'Shrimad Bhagwat' says a शूद्रोपि शील सूम्यन्नोगुणवान, ब्राह्मणोभवेत् — By birth a shudra, if a man is of good moral and good character, he is a Brahmin". In my two taped interviews Shri Shankaracharya of Dwarka Peeth and Kanchi Peeth have denounced all inhuman behaviour towards Harijians. They said that discrimination against Harijans is against Hindu-

ism. Many other Dharmacharyas have time and again declared the same. When Hinduism was at its zenith and was understood by people in its real essence there were no such type of atrocities on Harijans but recently there has been a downfall of Hinduism and increase in violence towards Harijans.

Unfortunately after independence vested interests have been trying to preserve this concept in order to safeguard their vote banks. Both the Government and the Press are guilty of abetting in the crime because they have decided to ignore the clarifications of the Dharmacharyas without bothering to understand their wider implications.

PROSPERITY THROUGH HINDUISM

The infirmities that have gripped Hindu society cannot be cured through legislation. What is needed is self-discipline cultivated through Hindu Dharma. History proves that whenever Hinduism flourished, the country was overflowing with wealth, prosperity, peace, fame, literature, music, art and humanity. The concepts of preservation of cows and greenery, which have deep-rooted basis in the country's agricultural structure,are the products of thousands of years of wisdom. Both these, it should be noted, are alien to any other culture It is a fact that no problems of India can be solved with out the self-discipline of Hinduism.

Shri Nani Palkhiwala, the eminent jurist and former Indian Ambassador to the USA, writes in his book 'India's Priceless Heritage': "Ancient Indians laid the foundations of mathematical and scientific knowledge. They measured both time and space, and mapped out the heavens. They analysed the constitution of the matter and understood the nature of the spirit. They conceived and developed the sciences of logic and grammar and made great advances in fields so divergent as anatomy and astronomy and metaphysics, medicine and mathematics. Let us look at some of the basic conclusions reached by ancient insights which have become the fundamentals of modern science".

INDIAN AND WESTERN PHILOSOPHIES

Sigmund Freud said "it is dangerous to suppress one's desires." The West swallowed this theory without giving it much thought and went on a spree to quench its thirst for the insatiable desires. The consequences was mad consumerism and rampant immorality giving birth to a value-less society.

In sharp contrast to this theory, the Hindu philosophy strikes at the very roots of the problems of life, be they physical, mental, social, religious and the like. Patanjali, in his 'Yoga Sutra', says 'योगश्चित्त वृत्ति निरोध:,' — Yoga is the sublimation and elimination of desires.' When there are no desires, there is naturally no question of their suppression.

Indian philosophy starts where western philosophy ends. It is for the elite Indians to understand this at this juncture and stop imitating and acquiring the evils of the immature, half-baked Western philosophy. In this we can certainly learn the spirit of research and dedication from the West. Revival of the ancient thirst for knowledge — the craving that prompted our Rishis to discover and create so much — will be the first step towards the finding of these new horizons.

NATIONAL UNITY AND SECULARISM

In an interiview with me published in 'Times of India', Sri Morarjj Desai declared that democracy is India's gift to the world. That was why among countries that became free after India attained independence, democracy was functioning nowhere but in India How different from Europe. which has but one religion, yet has seen two World Wars fought among its divided nations!

In his 'India's Road to Nationhood', German historian-dipiomat Von Pochhammer admits that "the power of Hinduism to unite its adherents has proved stronger than that of Christianity". Further, Syrian Christians and Zoraastrians were "no doubt received with tolerance" by the Hindus in the third and seventh centuries respectively. Von Pochammer

goes on to declare that the Indian secular State "rests upon the foundations of ancient Indian culture, which integrates various minorities in the same manner as the USA integrates people belonging to different races and different immigrant groups."

Within the framework of this Hindu Dharma 'मानव धर्म' 'Manav Dharma', every religion finds its proper place. This is possible because Hinduism is not an organised religion like that of a prophet. It believes that however great a prophet may be he cannot comprehend all the knowledge and truth of this vast universe. Hinduism is the faith of a conscience, a synthesis of all universal truths and contradictions preached by thousands of saints. In the true spirit of the Rigvedic chant, 'Let noble thoughts come to us from all sides', आनो भद्रा क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वत: अदब्धासो अपरितास उद्भिद: (यजु॰ 25 14) Hinduism practises the principle of co existence with all other religions.

The' Sanatan Dharma' says सर्वेषाणि विरोधानि समन्वाय: सभगवान — 'God is the synthesis and meeting point of all universal contradictions'. It believes in most scientific and universal philosophy of 'unity in diversity', which is the only bond that can hold together a country as huge as India with its diverse faiths, creeds, languages and customs.

This unity and emotional integration is the glorious heritage we have inherited from great men of wisdom born in India over the centuries If we undo their heritage we are heading for a great political, social and religious disaster So deep rooted is this feeling of secularism that Hindus never try to convert others to their faith; nor do thev ever destroy the places of worship of people of other faiths. Shivaji took special measures to protect mosques, Muslim women and children during the times of war. In fact Hinduism is the only secular religion in the world and its preservation the only guarantee towards communal peace and universal harmony; because it believes in mutual brotherly exchange between all religions instead of their conversions.

In order to re-assure people of other religions about our secular outlook, Hindus should have the liberty to preach

and to clarify through the Press, the TV and the radio. The Government, instead of terming this move as communal, should rather help the task because that is the only way minority communities today misled by foreigners could see through the game of vested interests. It will be unfortunate if Hindus are forced to abandon their policy of tolerance at the provocation of other religions

HINDUS' INFERIORITY COMPLEX

Shri Palkhiwala once remarked: "India is like a donkey carrying a sack of gold. The donkey does not know what it is carrying but it is content to go along with its load on its back." It is the tragedy of Hinduism that while world famous thinkers and philosophers are simply wonderstruck by the magnanimity and universal utility of this great faith, the Hindus themselves are blind to its glory.

The inheritors of such a noble heritage are unnecessarily suffering from a guilty conscience and are burdened with self-pity and inferiority complex. Some misguided Hindus, misled by their half-baked knowledge and falling prey to the false propaganda of vested interests, have started maligning their own mother religion to show off that they are secular. This has led to the sapping of the self-confidence and vitality of particularly the younger generation.

Gandhiji had forseen this threat long long ago. He had denounced such "drain inspectors of Hindu society" (like Miss Mayo).

FUTURE OF HINDUISM

The Hindu society still retains all the good and great human qualities on its balance-sheet. Only in the recent past did it produce a generation of great men — saints, scientists, mathematicians, poets, statesmen and others — and it is poised even today to contribute much to the peace and prosperity of mankind. This is possible because Hindus are intelligent, generous and hard.working, having produced

great warriors, artists, literary men, traders and industrialists who have gone all over the world and carved out a place of respect for themselves by dint of their ability, hard work, sincerity and humanity. During the freedom struggle and during the wars after that, Hindus have been in the forefront in laying down their lives for the national cause.

Despite such a glorious and stable past, Hinduism is today in mortal danger as never before. But Hindus are themselves to be blamed for this situation. The new generation of rich elite class, groomed in convent schools and indoctrinated in the materialistic charms of the Western culture, has become rootless. Since the Government as well as the media have turned myopic in their approach towards Hinduism, the community feels tongue-tied and helpless. Hence neither is it able to handle properly the younger generation — many of whose members care for neither their religion, nor family, nor the country — nor is it in a position to fight the vested interests that are trying to undermine the 'Hindu Dharma'.

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As a result, the Hindu society has become a house divided within itself — a house which is falling apart with the walls and foundations cracking. Who is going to live in such a house? Other communities shall respect us only when we are united. On our national platform we find on one side Muslims, Communists and modern 'educated' Hindus, and on another political parties with vested interests scheming to divide and weaken the Hindu society for petty gains. To add to the list of woes, the Press has stayed blind and unsympathetic towards the Hindu cause and the business community obsessed with the idea of earning just money and name, got alienated from it.

The latest threat is the spectre of conversion — a well-thought-out and deliberate plot against the Hindu community. In Nagaland, where the Christian population has swelled to almost 95 per cent, a conspiracy is afoot to carve out a separate, independent State. The spate of conversions in other parts of the country tell their own dubious tale. All

these are part of a wider international scheme to strike at the very roots of the Hindu culture and destroy the identity and glory of the Indian nation.

Today Hindus from Africa and other foreign places can come back to India in times of distress, but what will happen to them if Hinduism dies in India? Hindus residing in India also have no safe place to run away. Realising this they should work for the emancipation of Hindu Dharma and society. We should also immediately set our shoulders to the task of building a deep and lasting relationship with our brothers and help them spread the flame and knowledge of Hindu religion and culture abroad.

C. Rajagopalachari observed "if there is any honesty in India today, any hospitality, any chastity, any philanthropy, any tenderness to the dumb creatures, any aversion to evil, any love to do good it is due to whatever remains of the old faith and culture "

"The old faith and the old culture referred to by Rajaji are not merely for Hindus, not merely for India but for the whole world. Schelling in his old age, thought the Upanishads the maturest wisdom of mankind. Today that wisdom is essential not only for the rebirth of the Indian nation but also for the re-education of the human race."
(India's Priceless Heritage — N. A. Palkhiwala)

CAUSES OF HINDUISM'S DECLINE

In order to identify the malady and prescribe a cure, it is necessary to first diagnose the disease that has gripped Hinduism. The following are some of the causes.

1) **Ignorance of Dharma:** For a long long time Hindus have neglected Sanskrit, which enshrines all the knowledge, wisdom and culture sublimated in the crucible of 'Hindu Dharama'. This resulted in the loss of direction and purpose and engulfed Hindus into ignorance. The neglect of the

directive principles of the सनातनधर्म 'Sanatana Dharma' ended up in blind faith and hankering after petty gains. The noble वर्णाश्रम धर्म: 'Varnashrama Dharma' degenerated into 5,000 castes and sub-castes, though the feeling of high and low is totally against the spirit of the Upanishads. This further led to jealousies and India lost its freedom to alien invaders.

The 'रामायण' 'Ramayana' of Tulsidas played a crucial role in saving Hinduism from disaster. At a crucial juncture of foreign invasion, it gave the drifting Hindus a working knowledge of their religion and brought them back to their senses, because it was in the people's language. But Tulsidas's Ramayan is not capable of answering all the questions and solve all the problems confronting us. We will have to go back to the Vedas,the Upanishads and Gita today for a lasting solution to our woes. To facilitate this, translations of Sanskrit scriptures should be popularised among the people in their mother tongues.

2) **Balanced view of spiritualism and materialism:** In the Golden Age of Hinduism, the people struck a balance between spiritualism and materialism which helped sustained growth of the society. But subseqently the emphasis gradually shifted to pure spiritualism, thus forgetting to take into account the materialistic problems of daily life. This resulted in inertia, hypocricy and loss of faith among the Hindus. If the balance is restored, the damage caused by the imbalance could be immediately set right.

3) **Canvassing world opinion :** वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् — or the ideal of 'Universal brotherhood' and tolerance in a way proved the undoing of Hinduism. Not because there was anything wrong with the ideal, but because in putting it in practice, the Hindu kings proved over-generous and attracted invaders and plunderers from abroad. This emphasis on generosity and universality resulting in weakening of nationalism, political unawareness and political innocence are still the handicaps of Hinduism, holding it from playing its right role in the world which is unable to appreciate these great ideas.

4) **Western culture**: The Western invaders left behind some Indians alienated from their own people because of the brain-washing and propaganda they were fed on and who have no scruples in striking at the very roots of the activities and society of which they are the children.

As a result of these above factors, the present-day Hindu society suffers from the following infirmities;

a) **Selfishness** -- Considering money as the sole aim in life and spending it only on themselves without contributing anything to the betterment of society.

b) **Shortsightedness** — Sacrificing the larger interest of the future for the sake of immediate financial gains and for quick name and fame.

c) **Short-term Cures** — Providing temporary cures for a malady instead of tracing out the root of the problem by going deeper and curing it once for all.

d) **Lack of brotherhood**— Non-cooperation among the leaders of the society who are constantly suffering from ego problems born of their inferiority complex. They have become too individualistic and jealous of each other and lack the spirit of collective action prescribed in the Vedas.

e) **Lack of perspective** — Inability to perceive the danger on the horizon and failing to tackle the danger before it strikes.

SOME REMEDIES FOR THE AILMENT

The Vedas said हेयम् दुःख अनागतम् 'Prevent the disaster before it strikes you'. If we are to save Hinduism from the impending disaster, we will have to immediately adopt certain measures for the enlightenment and emancipation of the society:

1) Hindus should be well informed in simple language about the greatness, values and utility of their religion in order to inspire self-confidence and self-respect among themselves.

2) To counter the efforts to highlight the few shortcomings of Hinduism in order to denigrate it, the positive aspects should be highilghted through every possible means. Restoring the natural health of a person automatically cures several diseases at the same time. This is much better method than treating each of them separately. Balanced education of Hindu spirituality and western scientific attitude should be given to the students. It is the democratic right of Hindus to demand it from the Govt.

3) All Dharmacharys should put their heads together and evolve a concise, modern scientific religious code based on the basic tenets of Hinduism. This should strike a balance between the modern as well as orthodox ways of Hindus' daily life. It should also pinpoint the anomalies that have crept into Hinduism during the long historic turmoil it has been through. This code of values should be circulated to the Hindus throughout the length and breadth of the country as well as abroad in as many languages as possible to create the right awareness of their faith among the believers.

4) Literature spotlighting the great wisdom of Hinduism should be circulated every month among people of various walks of life — industrialists, journalists, litterateurs, politicians, etc. — to refresh their memory and to create greater awareness among them.

5) The media should be fully exploited to preach the universal truths of Hinduism and to counter and expose the false propaganda levelled against it.

6) Slogans like 'We Hindus are one', 'Untouchability is a crime against humaity', 'Respect men of character, not men in power', 'Remove corruption, remove poverty', should be displayed on walls and at public places.

7) Diwali and other festival greeting cards bearing quotations from the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Gita should be popularised. Apart from doing a noble work, this could also be a flourishing industry.

8) To lure Press, which seems to be obsessed with false statements and distortions from the mouths of the men in power, truth should be projected through time-to-time advertisements in the Press to create an all-round awakening in the country.

9) The wealth of temples should be spent on protecting the religion, in solving the devotees' chronic problems like education, medical aid, etc. Mass marriages could be arranged to cut down unnecessary expenses. Lastly, Dharmacharyas should take the lead in paving the way for upliftment of Harijans and other dowhtrodden people.

10) An Enlightment Cell should be set up to protest against injustice and untruths, to expose the false statements and unfair criticism appearing against Hinduism in the Press and other media. Even two lines on a postcard sent by a hundred people to the Press can work wonders. Similar revealing letters written by Hindus living abroad can play a very useful role in projecting the truth.

11) Lobbies should be built in Parliament and Legislative Assemblies to safeguard the rights of Hindus. This will be an exercise of a democratic right with a noble purpose in mind and cannot be construed as manipulation.

12) To avert the possibility of the Hindus abroad becoming rootless, steps should be taken to impart them knowledge of the Hindu religion and culture through every possible means.

13) And most important of all, a cadre of devoted and dedicated workers should be evolved from among the educated young either on a paid or a voluntary basis This gigantic mission should pursue all programmes with a balanced outlook, striving all the time to strike a harmonious balance between the modern and the orthodox.

14) Awards should be declared for the best book on Hinduism on its various aspects.

15) Parents should personally teach Hindu Dharma to their children as the Harekrishna devotees are doing.

OUR FIRST AND FINAL DUTY

We are living in bad times when people are prepared to change their faith for a mere fifty-rupee note. The huge amounts constantly pouring in from foreign countries are a great temptation for the victims of social insults, poverty, hunger and ignorance. Harijans and the poor are your brothers. Help them in every way and wipe off untouchability from India.

We are individually and collectively responsible for this state of affairs. None can disown the blame for this setback and everybody should contribute his mite to set things right. The first and last duty of a Hindu at this juncture is revival of the faith. If the Hindu masses do not respond to this challenge and turn alert and vigilant, they have no right to exist.

Unfortunately the men in power and the men with influence, those who command most of the country's resources and owe so much to Hinduism for their own rise, do not feel the urgency of saving the मानवधर्म, 'Manav Dharma' from the impending catastrophe. In this they are failing in their duty to the future generation, who will one day point their fingers at their forefathers as betrayers. The house they are building today for their kith and kin will be left without heirs if the present slide is not arrested in time. Here the business community owns a special responsibility.

The Vishva Hindu Parishad has stepped in at this crucial moment in Hinduism's history and pledged to fight injustice, ignorance, immorality and inertia that have pervaded the society. Through its over 3,000 branches within India and over 20 abroad, through its 837 projects like hospitals, schools and orphanages, through its 600 million followers spread all over the world it is fighting a glorious crusade. Its very concept of a Hindu, as one who follows any form of worship originating in India though residing anywhere, should be an eye-opener to the detractors of Hinduism.

If you want the emancipation of the weaker sections of the society and preservation of this noblest religion on earth

take up one of the various schemes of Vishva Hindu Parishad. It is the best form of worship.

Your whole-hearted support is solicited for your own survival. हेयम् दु:खं अनागतम् — 'Prevent the disaster before it strikes you'. It is the real philosophy of life.

The one thing a Hindu has to remember today is that 'God helps those who help themselves'. Root out fatalism from this country to root out inaction, discrimination and poverty from this golden land. If you want to preserve all that is beautiful in this world, if you want to remove corruption, exploitation of the poor, inhumanity towards Harijans and all that is ugly in India, defend real Hinduism with all your might to which-ever religion you belong.

The dire need of this space age fast hurtling into the future, are universality of outlook, unity in diversity, spiritualism, sarva dharma samabhava, non-violence, the philosophy of 'live and let live', a balanced view of womanhood, flexibility, supernatural awareness, through yoga for mastery over science, tranquility of mind and preservation of nature. These values form the various foundation stones on which the glorious temple of Hinduism was raised by great Rishis and Avatars — the corner-stone which has stood the test of time immemorial.

This book is available at —
Vishva Hindu Parishad,
B—11, South Extension part II,
New Delhi - 110049
(Tele phone No - 654444

GEMS FROM HINDU SCRIPTURES :

'एकस्थितः सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा'

— 'Only one soul dwells in all creatures'. — (Upanishad)

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'आत्मवत् सर्वभूतेषु'

— 'Consider all like your own' — (Upanishad)

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'सर्वभूत हितेरतः '

— 'Dedicate yourself to the service of all creatures' — (Gita)

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सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः, सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः

— 'May all be happy and healthy'.

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बहुजन सुखाय, बहुजन हिताय,

— Let welfare reach the common man'.

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अहिंसा परमोधर्मः

— 'Non-violence is the highest form of religion'.

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क्षमा वीरस्य भूषणम्

— Forgiveness is an ornament of the brave'.

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त्येन त्यक्तेन भुंजीथाः मा गृधः कस्यस्विद्धमम्

— 'Enjoy through renunciation not through greed' — (Yajur Veda)

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मित्रस्य चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षामहे

— Let us look at all persons with friendliness'. — (Yajur Veda)

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जीवस्था जीव्यासम्

— 'You live and let me live also' — (Atharva Veda)

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उत्देवा अवहितम् देवा उन्नयथा पुनः

'O! learned men, uplift the downtrodden again' — (Rig Veda)

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समानी व आकूति समाना हृदयानि व:
समानमस्तु वो मनो यथा व: सुसहासति

— 'May you resolve with one voice. May your hearts and thought be united so that you may live together with unity and happiness' — (Rig Veda)

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क्षत्रिया राजन्यम्

— 'Ruler is for protection' — (Yajur Veda)

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त्वं राष्ट्राणि रक्षतिस

— 'Thou art the protector of your nation' — (Atharva Veda)

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यतेमहि स्वराज्ये

— We should endeavour for self rule' — (Rig Veda)

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पृथ्वी धर्मणा धृतम्

— 'This earth is sustained by religion'
— (Atharv Veda)

* * * * *

धर्मं शरणं गच्छामि

— 'I surrender myself to religion'.

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उपसर्प मातरम् भूमिम्

— 'Serve thy motherland' — (Rig Veda)

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स्वस्ति गोभ्य: जगते पुरुषेभ्य:

— 'May all men, beasts and birds be blessed with peace and prosperity' — (Atharva Veda)

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यत्र नार्यास्तु पुज्यन्ते रमन्ते तत्र देवता:

Gods dwell where women are worshipped' —Manu
There are thousands of such gems in Hindu scriptures but unfortunately we don't want to see towards them. We are interested only in becoming the drain inspectors of Hindu religion.

HINDUS IN THE EYES OF FOREIGNERS

1) All In lians whether princes living in palaces or poor people living in small cottages, they are the most noble and modest people on earth as it is their racial quality.

They repay every just and fair act and never neglect any duty of kindness and sympathy.

— **Lord Willingdon.**

2) Indians are so honest that they don't need any locks on their door neither do they need any document in writing for the proof of an agreement.

Famous Greek Historian, Mr. Strebo.

3) O : Ancient land of India, O : protector of mankind, vow to thee, O : sacred land.

Centuries of horrible atrocities have not been able to destroy you. Welcome to thee, vow to thee, O : originator and mother of faith, love, art and science.

— **M. Lui Jacoliet.**

4) In the face of an Indian, you can see the natural glory of life, while we have covered ourselves with an artificial cloak.

In the soft lines of their noble faces we see the impression of the hand of God.

— **George Bernard Shaw.**

5) The Indian civilization which gloried in its great prosperity, new nothing about locks. Can any where people even imagine about a fraction of honesty which is in Hindus.

— **Greek Ambassador, Megasthanese.**

6) Hindus are religious, cheerful,Justice loving, truthful, grateful and God loving.

—**English Poet Samuel Johnson.**

7) Hindus are topmost in intelligence and thinking. Their knowledge of Arithmetic and Astronomy is more realistic than any other race. Their opinion about medical diagnosis and treatment is of the first rank.

— **Yakube. (9th century)**

8) Hindus are sympathetic and merciful towards all. They have no malice towards any body in this world

— **Historian Abul Fazal.**

9) Crores of Indians live like saints They are innocent, sincere and without malice towards any one.

—**Prof P. George.**

10) Many are the religions and many the races which are flourishing in India, but let Hinduism go, Hinduism that was India's cradle, and in that passing would be India's grave.

— **Mrs Annie Besant.**